



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



CHARLES JOHN COLLINGS
SKETCHING IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

—Courtesy The Carroll Gallery—London

The Effect of the War on Art in Europe

By "MAHLSTICK," London Correspondent

The Copyright of this article is strictly reserved to Mr.
Luscombe Carroll, 19 George Street, Hanover Square,
London, W.

ONE of the most important and interesting of the side issues of the war is the probable influence and effect on the course and future fortunes of art and artists. Immediately, of course, the effect financially among the nations engaged, except perhaps in England, spells disaster writ large. In France where every man between twenty and forty-eight has been called to the colors, and in stricken, devastated Belgium the place of the artist, as such, knows him no longer. In Germany it must be the same, and of Austria it was reported comparatively early in the war that in Vienna at the public food distributions, artists, authors and actors were the first applicants. Needless to say all the exhibitions are closed down indefinitely in these countries.

In England the situation is nothing like so bad, but it is not all *couleur de rose* even here, and the central charitable art institution, known as "the Artists' General Benevolent Fund," has been making preparations in conjunction with the wealthier painters and sculptors to deal with contingencies as they arise. Among other schemes, there was an excellent one, by which all the accepted portrait painters agreed to paint two portraits of a stated size for fifty guineas each of anyone who in any way was doing service in the war at the front, whether as combatant, nurse, chaplain, doctor, chauffeur, or what not. Half of this sum was to be for the above mentioned organization—the Artists' General Benevolent—the balance for the painter. As the ordinary charge by most of the men in the list would



STUDIO OF VAL DAVIS ORIGINALLY BUILT FOR THE LATE E. J. GREGORY, R. A.

be from two to five hundred pounds, it certainly offered an opportunity to serve oneself, as well as an excellent cause.

As I have said, things are bad enough here in England, but at the same time—and this shows the extraordinary position that the command of the sea and consequently her unrestricted commerce has enabled England to retain—that in the throes of this titanic contest there are still found quite an appreciable number of people able and willing to buy pictures. The provincial towns have held their exhibitions as usual and only one London exhibition, the Royal Institute of Oil Painters, decided not to open for the autumn and winter. Commercial art firms like the Carlton Studios and others after the first shock became and have remained quite busy, though on reduced rates. These facts form an instructive commentary on German and Austrian reports about our panic-stricken-privation-pinched state. Artists in London are a “long, long way” from the conditions which prevailed in

Paris during the siege of 1870-71. A little coterie of distinguished writers and painters used to meet at Brabant's to discuss the war happenings of the day over their apology for a dinner. One evening to their surprise and delight a very presentable saddle of mutton was placed before them. After a few mouthfuls it somehow transpired that the sheep had been a Newfoundland dog! Renan, who was of the company, turned a vivid green and rushed from the table; the others, however, philosophically asked what was in a name; the meat had tasted good in the first instance and still did—why worry about its nomenclature?—and so the feast proceeded. I believe a well-known draughtsman named Pilotel, whom I often saw afterwards in London, was one of that dinner party. He was a great gross mountain of a man; he had had to fly from France after the Commune, and was popularly reported here to have killed the Archbishop of Paris, Monsignor Affré, with his own hand; he certainly looked brute

enough; he did eventually find his way into an English prison for some vile offense. Yet this great lumbering animal drew the most dainty fashion plates imaginable; they are sought after now by collectors. I used to meet another Communist refugee at Ford Madox Brown's and at the Rosettis, but he was the mildest mannered Communard that ever fought behind a barricade. It is not in Paris that we are likely to see such men and events again—it was another France in 1870; Berlin rather or Vienna may parallel them this time.

It is noticeable, and I take it as a sign of the times, that men's minds are quite as keenly occupied with thoughts and speculations as to the spiritual and moral aftermath of the war, or the hopes and probabilities of peace, as to the territorial and political changes that will result. This suggests that in spite of the abounding progress in wealth and the discoveries and inventions in science and industry all tending to our greater material well being, it has been felt for a long time that all was *not* "well with the world" and that terrible beyond all imagining though the war is proving in its waste of life and treasure, yet with it there has dawned the hope that it may in its visitation sweep away much that was disquieting to those who, watching the drift and tendency of the time, feared abysses ahead such as have in the past engulfed civilization as proud and confident as our own.

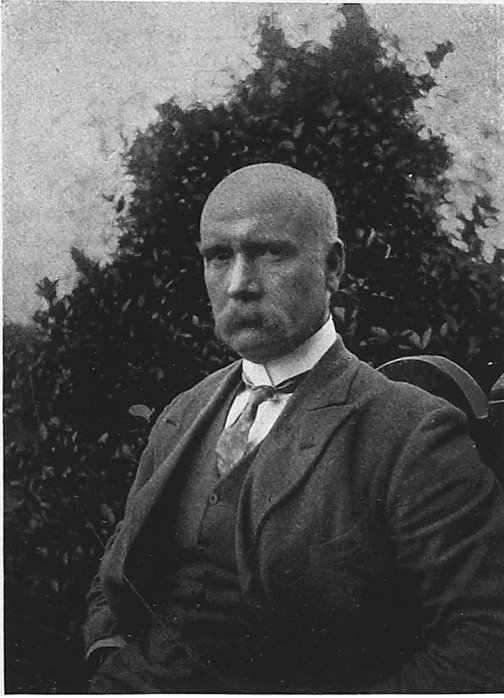
Such preoccupation of men's minds with the ethical and moral aftermath of the war would seem to indicate the nature of the malaise of the age—its loss of spirituality, its lack of conviction, the absence or denial of definite standard for life and conduct, except that of "fool-about-as-you-please for to-morrow we die and our judgments and beliefs with us." This unsoundness had begun to taint every phase and manifestation of man's labors, but I am safe in saying that nowhere has its moral miasma produced such extreme and palpable results as in art. Indeed beyond them it is not pos-



MRS. VAL DAVIS AND HER PET DOG

sible to go, as can be easily proved from the utterances and productions of the decadents themselves. I am not to be understood as asserting that the arts of Painting and Sculpture of today are in the mass decadent. Far from it. I refer to that leaven of rottenness which is as yet confined to certain extreme cliques and movements; but we all know and dread the power of a leaven to ferment through and through and finally disintegrate any organism where it once has gained an entrance.

Most lovers of the arts have from the first viewed these advanced movements and tendencies with undisguised aversion and misgiving. My readers will recognize them when I describe them syncopatedly, as the "isms," Impressionism, Cubism or Volumism, etc., etc. They will very probably also be surprised or even shocked at my inclusion of the Impressionist movement in my condemnation; but, whilst not in any way denying the interest, the stimulus and even in a sense new outlook it opened in art, yet



TAL DAVIS—LONDON, ENGLAND—MEMBER
THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS
AUTHOR OF THE "MAHLSTICK" LETTERS
TO THE FINE ARTS JOURNAL

somewhere at its root lurks a falsehood which has in course of time given birth to the brood of Van Goghs, Picassiss, Matisses, et omne troc genus. Impressionism contained the germ of the principle that art can only advance and develop along the line of utter freedom from all shackling laws and limitations—whether of tradition, convention or authority; hence it frequently stood for nothing more than the whim or idiosyncrasy of the artist. In the ultra schools of our day these repudiated "laws and limitations" include drawing, color harmonies, perspective, etc.; in fact, any method of articulate or coherent expression, and to such an extent that a canvas splashed over with color from the tail of a donkey was sent as a practical joke to a Paris Exhibition of one or others of the "isms," was hung—and was seriously discussed as a profoundly and pregnantly enigmatical expression of the artist's inner vision.

But where, I may be asked, would or could such ribaldry passing as art have hoped to meet any sort of recognition, except a passing glance of wonderment and contempt? Alas! it found it in a blasé fashionable world, dissatisfied with itself, conscious of defection from standards of life and conduct which, though it smiled at, it respected, and wearied and jaded with a pursuit of pleasure, rendered fiercer and faster by the whole series of inventions which have marked this age out from all others.

Society, the wealthy and leisured classes, no longer were satisfied with entertainments in their own beautiful homes, so presently we have the week-end fashion, which posterity will recognize—though so plausibly innocent and even beneficial—as one of the influences which most deeply and dangerously, because insidiously, has undermined the foundations of our social wellbeing. Religious observance, the relations of and mutual attitude of the sexes, the life of the family and the home have been modified by it to their peril and detriment, reinforced trebly as it has been by the coming and perfecting of the motor car. Finally, to complete the negation of the home, we have the dining out—the restaurant fashion—with its flamboyance and swagger, its lack of refinement and reticence. There are numberless homes in London which practically are never seen after morning hours by their owners till bedtime, except once in a way when they stay at home for a "rest cure." To such a world Post Impressionism, Cubism, Futurism, and the rest came with their japes, their audacities, their brazen, blatant incompetencies, and, last but not least, their indecencies, and were received with mocking zest and welcome, as might strolling mountebanks to some medieval fete or tourney. The season of the first of these exhibitions was quite a sad one for many among us; the world and his wife went there en bloc; it was the catch, the event, the joke of the year. Never had

been seen anything so outrageously diverting; they laughed till the tears ran—while the lovers of their beloved mistress, Art, in their turn felt like tears to see her so held up to ridicule. It is not, therefore, altogether a matter of surprise that the thoughts of artists as well as all men concerned with the higher things of life are already, even amidst the terrors of this appalling conflagration throughout Europe, looking forward to a world purified in its fires; a world which will have turned from the dread realities of war to understand and appreciate the real blessings and the true pleasures of peace, those of the hearth and the home, to the beautifying of which art, itself chastened, will come with its message from the heart of nature and the soul of man.

Editor's Note.—The illustrations herein may be interesting to our readers as showing them one type of London Studio. In this one—which was originally built for the late E. J. Gregory, R. A., and is now in the occupancy of our contributor "Mahlstick"—it has been intended to combine the necessities of the workroom in which the pictures are painted with the attributes of a salon in which they can be shown in an environment where everything, architecture, the furniture, the decoration, all seem to enhance the beauty and emphasize the message of the artist's work.

The pillars and pilasters shown are of a very beautiful red marble, and they possess considerable antiquarian and historic interest, as they came direct, at the time of its demolition, from old Northumberland House. Many of us can recall its great forbidding frontal, filling the south side of Trafalgar Square, with its famous lion always so prominent against the sky-line. The ancient garden of many acres went back to a fine water-gate on the Thames. Northumberland Avenue and its hotels stand on a portion of them, and in the opinion of many besides antiquarians and archaeologists they but poorly recompense us for the sweeping away of this wonderful link with the past, set, amid the modernities and activities of our own day; when we say it was the London house of the Percys, what thoughts, what memories, are conjured up!

The portrait on the easel is the daughter of the noted Reverend Charles Murrell, whom some of our readers may remember as one of the most successful and popular lecturers who has ever visited the United States. The lady with the fan, robed in a genuine early Georgian dress very little short of two hundred years old, is Mrs. Val Davis, the wife of the contributor of this article. Mr. Val Davis, who is a well known member of the Royal Society of British Artists, is one of the most capable writers upon art matters in the Old World; his contributions, which will appear monthly in the FINE ARTS JOURNAL over the nom-de-plume of "Mahlstick," we confidently predict will form one of the most interesting features of our production.

